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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

Morocco

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The Moroccan Government attaches great importance to the right to development, having actively participated in the discussion and elaboration of the international instruments on this question and subscribed to the following in particular:

- resolution 1514 (XV) of 15 December 1960 (Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples);

- resolution 1803 (XVII) of 14 December 1962 (permanent sovereignty over natural resources);

- resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 (Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States);

- resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986 (Declaration on the Right to Development).

At the internal level, the Advisory Council on Human Rights concerns itself with economic and social rights among others. In entrusting these matters to the Advisory Council, His Majesty the King of Morocco had said: "of course, human rights are one thing, but there are also other rights which, while not dealt with by other bodies, require consideration because they fall within the category of human rights, namely in this instance social rights, the minimum subsistence level and any right calculated to give citizens dignity in the enjoyment of all their freedoms..."

A permanent working group to examine the questions relating to social and economic rights has moreover been set up within the Advisory Council on Human Rights.

Given Morocco's awareness of the great importance of these rights and its conviction of the need for all the parties concerned to participate in drawing up general guidelines for the national economy and economic and social strategies for the country, an Economic and Social Council was established within the framework of the Moroccan Constitution on 4 September 1992.

Morocco passed an important stage in its development at the end of the 1980s. The aims pursued in respect of stabilization and modernization attest to the expertise acquired in economic policy.

The results of the survey on living standards (1990-1991) show a positive trend in economic and social development indicators and a fundamental improvement in the standard of living of Moroccans. This is borne out by several indicators, including the substantial decline in the number of people living below the poverty line, which fell from 21 per cent of the population in 1985 to 13.1 per cent in 1991.

Aside from the traditional indicators reflecting internal and external financial balance sheets and economic growth, which showed a marked improvement, there are still contrasts in the country's economic performance. On the one hand, the rise in the overall standard of living, measured in terms of the sharp decline in the rate of poverty, is an impressive one. On the

other hand, the strong upward trend in a number of social indicators cannot conceal the persistence of major disparities between regions, rural and urban communities and social strata.

The improvements have been particularly marked in the areas of income and consumption, and are explained mainly by economic growth. They attest to the legitimacy of the frequently difficult economic choices that have been made and reflect the need to continue the tight policies embarked upon.

The country's performance figures are also praiseworthy when looked at from the standpoint of basic social indicators. At the national level, the indicators of health, literacy, schooling, housing and access to water and sanitation have shown substantial gains, although there is plenty of room for improvement, primarily through the reduction of lingering disparities.

As regard the application of the Declaration on the Right to Development, there is no doubt that the fight against poverty is the major challenge that has to be taken up by every country as the century draws to a close. Action to combat poverty should in fact be a priority, not only because of its undermining effects on the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, but also because of the threat it poses to the values of democracy and human dignity.

States therefore have an individual and collective duty to combine their efforts in joint action to reduce and eliminate poverty and accomplish the objectives of the Declaration. The need for such action is particularly urgent since the disparities and the gulf between rich and poor countries are growing ever wider and deeper.

The Declaration on the Right to Development recognizes that "development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom".

There are admittedly several dimensions to the right to development, which cannot therefore be confined solely to the economic dimension. It is both every person's individual right and a collective right of every nation and all nations together.

Thus, the right to development necessarily presupposes increased international cooperation on the basis of what the Secretary-General of the United Nations calls "the new international development ethic". It is also the key to long-term peace inasmuch as it constitutes both the condition and the result thereof; indeed, there can be no peace without development and no development without peace.

There has been a recent shift in the focus of the debate on the right to development within the various international organizations, at a time when the international community is attempting to adopt a new conceptual approach to development and international cooperation.

The holding of UNCTAD VIII in Cartagena, the spirit of which we hope to see prevail in international economic and trade relations, followed by the conclusion in Marrakesh of the Uruguay Round negotiations, constitute a significant step in this direction. They should open up new prospects for the revitalization of the world economy and the strengthening of international economic and commercial cooperation, resulting in a boost to world prosperity and a gradual improvement in living conditions.

Morocco hopes that the same spirit of compromise and liberalization will prevail in other crucial areas, particularly as regards the international development strategy, the substantial programme of action for the least developed countries, as well as the implementation of the Common Fund for Commodities and the arrangements for reducing external debt which is a real obstacle to development.

The right to development forms an integral part of basic human rights. No other right comprehensively reflects the aspiration of individuals, communities and nations to better conditions of existence where their dignity would be preserved through the satisfaction of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

For that reason, Morocco considers that human rights and development are likely to promote credible and constructive political and economic relations between States, on the basis of mutual interest and cooperation.

As far as the developing countries are concerned, the much sought-after ideals of economic and social progress remain out of range and the prospects for economic recovery are becoming dangerously uncertain. The demand for their integration into the world economy also remains unfulfillable in an unfavourable international economic and commercial environment marked by difficulties of access to external markets, falling prices for primary products and the deterioration of the terms of trade, the increase in the cost of credit and the inadequacy of international assistance - all factors which help to increase the burden of the external debt.

Faced with this crisis, the developing countries have resigned themselves to implementing structural adjustment programmes frequently involving the adoption of austerity measures which have an adverse impact on vital social sectors.

These social repercussions have moreover prompted certain United Nations agencies to advocate "Adjustment with a human face", while other international institutions have been led to review their conception of development. This reappraisal is justified in so far as the well being of any society cannot be envisaged exclusively in terms of consumption without taking into account the requirements of equity and social justice.

Morocco is convinced that States bear special responsibilities with regard to the implementation of development policies geared to the human person as actor and beneficiary, as there is no better investment than one directed to man in all his many aspects.

However, Morocco also remains convinced that the efforts of States can bear full fruit only in a climate of international partnership based on justice and equality of opportunity both within and between nations, for the good of mankind as a whole.

It is therefore necessary for the international community, Governments and the international organizations to coordinate their efforts more vigorously in order to give concrete effect to the right to development and achieve the objectives of the Declaration on the Right to Development.